

Daphne.Duke

244386

From: Jocelyn.Boyd
Sent: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 8:43 AM
To: charles.terreni@terrenilaw.com; selliott@elliottlaw.us; John M. S. Hoefer (jhoefer@willoughbyhoefer.com); Hipp, Dawn
Cc: Deborah.Easterling; Tricia.DeSanty; Daphne.Duke
Subject: FW: Gerlipp Utilities Inc Complaint
Attachments: 2013 06-03 UTILITIES INC LTR.doc; img325.jpg

From: patricia gerlipp [<mailto:mskener@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Monday, June 03, 2013 3:07 PM
To: Campbell, Chad; Harringc@dhec.sc.gov; Jocelyn.Boyd
Subject: Gerlipp Utilities Inc Complaint

Attached find the reply I received from UI concerning my complaint as well as my rebutal letter

PATRICIA GERLIPP
12033 Spinnaker Drive
Tega Cay, SC 29708
mskener2@aol.com
803-547-2352

June 3, 2013

VIA EMAIL

Richard J. Durham
Regional Vice President
Utilities, Inc.

Dear Mr. Durham:

It came as no surprise that your response was not in my favor. However, this is just another case of the "little people vs corporations".

- The UI technician that was sent to my house specifically indicated to me that *IF I had a leak*, it was a particularly minor one because he didn't see the meter moving significantly; and yes, he did indicate that I had used 1,670 gallons of water in a short period of time.
- While that might seem like a lot of water for a short period of time, what your technician couldn't have known and what those numbers don't indicate for the time period between 5/18 and 5/23 is as follows:
 - Manual watering of my plants upon return to home after 21 days
 - Multiple loads of laundry to wash 21 days of clothes, underwear, bedding, etc.
 - Use of dishwasher
 - Showers taken
 - Car Wash
 - The use of water to hose down deck and outdoor furniture
 - Cleaning service coming in to clean house, bathrooms, floors, etc.
- My plumber explicitly told me that there was no leakage in my home that could account for or be responsible for the loss of 9,250 gallons of water at a time when I was out of the country. **This is confirmed by the fact that my usage since 5/24 has amounted to between 25-30 gallons per day clearly showing that, if I was losing the 200 gallons per hour that you say I was, I would have used far more than 1,670 gallons between 5/18 and 5/23 when your technician re-read the meter—28,800 gallons by my count.**
- I'd also like to point out that your letter indicates both 200 gallons *per hour* and 200 gallons *per day*—which is it? Even at 200 gallons *per day*, it would have only *amounted to 4,200 gallons for a 21-day period of time while no one was living in the house. What caused the additional 5,000 gallons to be used during that same time period while the house was vacant?*
- If it had been a 200-gallon *per hour* leak, it would amount to 4,800 gallons of water daily. If that were the case, when I flushed a toilet before I left on 4/28/13 causing running water at the rate you say it did, my consumption would have amounted to over 100,000 gallons by your calculations because it would have been running for 21 days.
- You didn't indicate who it was you supposedly spoke to at the plumbing company I used or who gave you a different story of what went on in my home. **I, for one would like to know what interrogation tactics or pressure you used to illicit a totally contradictory story than what I was told while the plumber was at my home.**

- You never addressed the fact that your consumption graphs for my most recent invoice and the prior invoice do not show the same levels of usage listed for comparable time periods.
- You also never supplied a logical explanation for usage that fluctuated from as little as 1,630 gallons in a 31-day period to as much as 4,370 for a 35-day period (*this during 10/12-11/12 time period –a time of the year when there is no reason for that much usage since it isn't a high time for watering, shower taking or extra laundry due to warm weather conditions,*) nor did you explain the other huge usage fluctuations during the last 12 months when, *IF I HAD A LEAK, I would have had consistently higher readings instead of the wide variations month to month.*
- As I have stated, I am the same individual living alone in the same house, practicing the same water consumption methods daily so there should be no enormous variations in the gallons of water that are used—*slight variations, yes, but not the glaring variations indicated on my invoices.*
- You never addressed the fact that there are least two other women living alone in Tega Cay that have come up against the same problem with UI (goes to pattern), one of which you actually came to an agreement with in order to readjust her billing because her meter hadn't be read in months and made very clear by the fact that when they opened her water meter, it was clogged with leaves making it impossible for a reading to take place.

Instead of taking this opportunity to create goodwill through customer service, UI is doing what it does best—stonewalling the customer. Whether or not I win this fight, I will definitely be at the head of the line to wave goodbye to UI when it is finally run out of town for it's questionable service, maintenance and billing practices.

Sincerely,

Patricia Gerlipp

CC: Ms. Lisa A. Sparrow, Chief Executive Officer
lasparrow@uiwater.com
 Mr. John Stover, Chief Legal Officer
 Steven M. Lubertozzi, Executive Director of Regulatory Accounting
smlubertozzi@uiwater.com
 Linda Stevenson, Tega Cay Water Citizen Advisory Council
lks@comporium.net

Harringc@dhec.sc.gov
ccampbe@regstaff.sc.gov
Jocelyn.boyd@psc.sc.gov



May 31, 2013

Ms. Patricia Gerlipp
12033 Spinnaker Drive
Tega Cay, SC 29708

Sent via email – mskener2@aol.com

Dear Ms. Gerlipp:

Thank you for your letter to Lisa Sparrow of May 30, 2013. Ms. Sparrow referred your correspondence to my attention, and I am writing to address your concerns.

I have reviewed your account history and you have not received an estimated bill during the period in question. The bills you have received during the period referred to in your letter (March 15, 2013 to May 17, 2013) were not estimated and are based on the actual water consumption at your premises. I have reviewed your historical usage and I agree that your usage does seem unusually high during the billing period between April 15 and May 17. However, I do not have any reason to believe that the increase in your water consumption was caused by a defect in our meter or system.

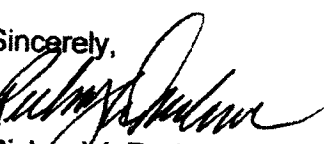
As you mentioned in your letter, our field operator visited your house on May 23, 2013 in response to your May 22, 2013 call and found that, while your meter appeared to be functioning properly, it was showing a large amount of ongoing water consumption. The operator explained that this high consumption indicated a source of water loss in your system such as a leaking pipe, a running faucet, or a leaking toilet, and that failing to address the source of the water loss would result in significant charges on your next bill.

We contacted the plumbing service that completed the work to better understand the scope of work we were being asked to pay for since it was clear from the invoice that only the service line had been tested (It would be highly unusual for a plumber to limit his scope to the service line since the majority of leaks behind the meter are in the home.) The plumbing service advised that they investigated the entire home on the same trip and repaired at least one toilet which was placed on a separate invoice at your request. As evidenced by the re-reads shown in the 12-month consumption history attached, the usage has returned to a normal range following the plumber's repair. While we certainly understand you may be the only individual living in the home, the number of plumbing fixtures in a house is a more dependent variable for leaks than the number of people living in the home. For example, one open flapper condition in a bathroom toilet can leak 200 gallons per hour. You appeared to have a leak in the 200 gallons per day range which would more than be explained by the leaky seal that was replaced.

Since there was in fact a home leak repaired by the plumber, Tega Cay Water Service will not be responsible for the reimbursement of the plumber's invoice. Furthermore, based on our findings we do expect full payment of the bill in question.

We trust this responds to your inquiry. Please let us know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durham
Regional Vice President

a Utilities, Inc. company Tega Cay Water Service, Inc.

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